

## Family Animals: Reading Historic Photographs

### Overview

This is an introductory lesson in using primary sources, in this case historical photographs. The students will be introduced to how you “read” a photograph and will be asked to write a caption for the photograph. They will compare and contrast the lives of children living in Kansas in the past with their lives today. The lesson can be completed in two or three sessions.

### Standards

History:

Benchmark 4, Indicator 3 The student scans historic photographs to gain information.

Writing:

Benchmark 1, Indicator 3 The student writes about one idea using pictures, letters, and words.

### Objectives

Skills:

- The student practices reading an historic photograph by locating objects in that photograph.
- The student writes captions for historic photographs.
- The student compares and contrasts the lives of Kansas children living a long time ago, with his or her life today.

### Essential Questions

- Can we learn about the past from photographs?
- What is present and what is past?
- Did people in the past live the way we do today?

## Activities

This activity uses the following *Read Kansas* cards:

- **Family Animals** (Photographs 1 and 2)
- **More Family Animals** (Photographs 3 and 4)

### Day 1 (longer if necessary)

1. Explain to the students that we can learn a lot from photographs, including how people lived a long time ago. Share with the class the **Family Animals** *Read Kansas* card photograph 1. Read the script (on page 3) and have the students answer the questions as you read. Students will be learning to “read” a historic photograph.
2. Use the **Family Animals** worksheet and have the class complete the sentence at the bottom of the page.
3. Share with the class the photograph on **Family Animals** *Read Kansas* card photograph 2. This photograph is from Kansas and was taken around 1908 to 1910. As a class make a list of the animals seen in each photograph. Also note anything else the class thinks is important. Save the list.
4. Use the **Writing a Caption** worksheet and have the students write a caption for *Read Kansas* card photograph 2.

### Day 2

1. Share with the class the **More Family Animals** *Read Kansas* card photograph 3. This photograph is also from Kansas and was taken around 1908 to 1910.
2. As a class make a list of the animals seen in the photograph. Also note anything else the class thinks is important. Save the list.
3. Use the **Writing a Caption** worksheet and have the students write a caption for *Read Kansas* card photograph 3.
4. Use the **More Family Animals** *Read Kansas* card photograph 4 and follow the same steps as done with the previous photographs.

### Day 3

1. Ask the students to bring in a photograph of himself or herself with a pet or any other animal. If they do not have a picture with a pet, then any photograph will work.
2. Put the pictures up in the room. As a class, make a list of the types of animals that are seen in the pictures. Also note anything else the class thinks is important in the photographs. Save this list.
3. As a class, compare the lists you made in reading the class photographs with the list you made reading the historic photographs. Discuss what we have in common with the children who lived long ago in Kansas.

## Assessment

1. Observe the students’ ability to locate the animals in **Family Animals** worksheet.
2. Evaluate the students’ ability to write captions for the historic photographs on the **Writing a Caption** worksheet.
3. Observe the students’ ability to participate in identifying what is alike and what is different in the historic photographs and the class photographs.

## For the Teacher

Historic photographs are great tools for teaching very young students about how we learn about the past. They also allow students to work with primary source materials at a very young age.

A primary source is a document or artifact that is a first hand account of or something created at the time period being studied. Primary sources are used to interpret the stories of the past. They are what historians use to understand not only what happened in the past but how people felt about their lives.

### Script

Use **Family Animals 1** Read Kansas card. *This photograph was taken in Morris County in the 1880s. Read the following script to the students, having them answer the questions as you read.*

**Teacher:** This photograph was taken a long, long time ago.  
This family lived in Kansas.  
They lived in a stone house and raised **chickens**.

Can you find the chickens in the photograph?

Chickens give us eggs to eat.

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The family also had **horses**.

Can you find a horse in the photograph?

The horses helped the family.  
In the photograph one horse is pulling a buggy.  
The family rode in the buggy to visit their neighbors or to go to town.

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If you look carefully at the photograph you can see the family **dog**.

Can you find the dog in the photograph?

Why do you think the family had a dog?

This family lived in Kansas a long time ago.  
How is their life like yours?  
How is your life different?

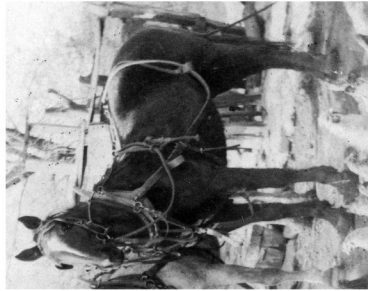
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Resources for this lesson are from:

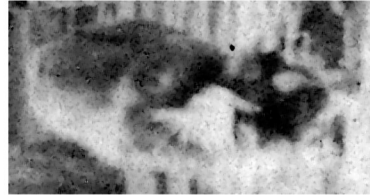
- Kansas State Historical Society collections



**chicken**



**horse**



**dog**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Family Animals

Worksheet



I see a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Writing a Caption

Worksheet

## Word Bank:

boys  
cat  
dog  
kids  
mule  
turkeys

Photograph Number 2



I like my \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Photograph Number 3



I see two \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_.

Photograph Number 4



I see \_\_\_\_\_ and two \_\_\_\_\_.